COTTON CHATS

DRAPER COMPANY, HOPEDALE, MASS.

COTTON CHATS

DRAPER COMPANY

TRADE-MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

HOPEDALE, MASS.

NO. 144. OCTOBER, 1914.

THE NEWS A CENTURY AGO.

[FROM THE FILES OF THE EVENING POST OF 1814.]

[*From the Richmond Daily Compiler.*]

The Loom—This admirable piece of mechanism, at once the triumph of American ingenuity and one of the surest pillars of her independence, remains still at the Capitol for the inspection and gratification of the curious. A number of ladies and gentlemen visited it yesterday, and all were surprised and delighted at the simplicity of its construction and movement, the rapidity of its execution, and the excellence of the fabrick which it produces. *That* now in the loom, is a piece of cotton shirting worth about 75 cents per yard, and it is truly interesting to observe how visibly to the eye the operation of the machine causes it to grow into existence. We are told that a young girl of ordinary capacity may in two or three days learn to weave at the rate of fifteen yards a day; and a more skilful artist, twenty-five to thirty yards. The shuttle, it is said, may be thrown with the astonishing celerity of 150 to 200 times in a minute; and the manuel power requisite to produce this *lightning* movement is not greater or more laborious, apparently, than that which would be necessary for the grinding of coffee and the churning of butter. The economical and the curious, the industrious and the fashionable, the money-making and money saving in the domestic or manufacturing line—and in short all the citizens of Richmond, are invited to go and examine this chief d'œuvre of the useful arts.

[Aug. 17, 1814.]

IT'S A LONG LONG WAY

back to August 17, 1814, on which date the article which we reprint on front page appeared in the columns of a Richmond, Virginia, paper. It is seldom that we have opportunity to quote news 100 years old which is of interest to the cotton manufacturers of today.

The article in question describes the first power loom as a

"Triumph of American Ingenuity and One of the Surest Pillars of Her Independence,"

words which were truly prophetic.

It is noteworthy that the number of picks per minute mentioned is practically the same today; the yards per loom per expert weaver have increased seventy-five to one hundred per cent.; the selling price of the goods has been reduced eighty to ninety per cent. and the productive capacity per weaver has been increased twenty to thirty fold.

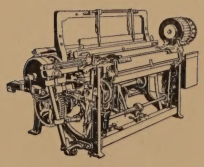
Closely following the power loom came the invention of the first self-acting loom temple by Ira Draper. This improvement enabled the weaver to tend two looms and thus reduced the labor cost of weaving one-half, while at the same time making the work easier.

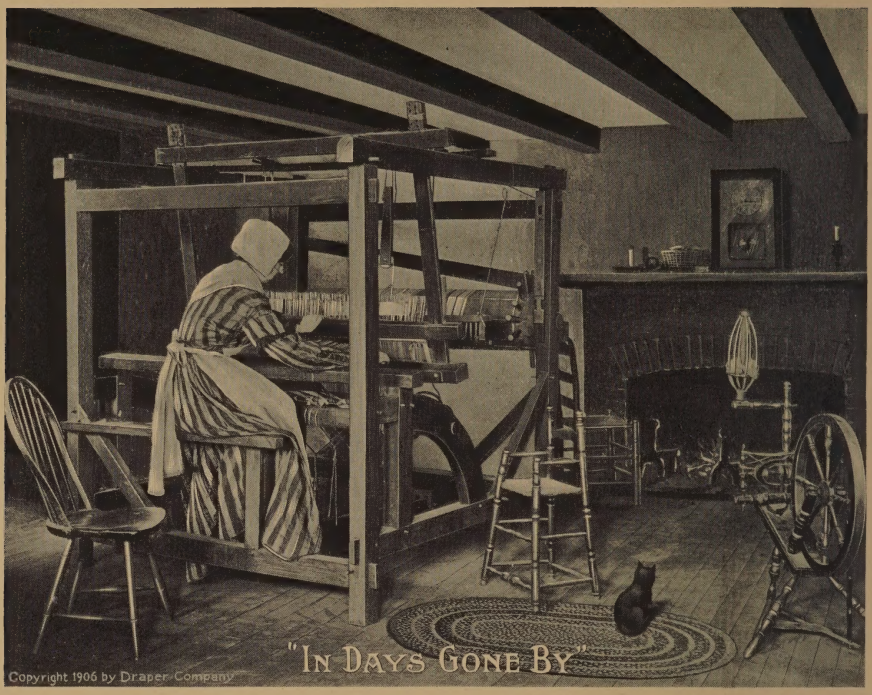
From time to time improvements were made in the let-off, the take-up, the shuttle motion, and the temples, which were the subjects of numerous patents and these improvements were introduced by our predecessors. From the early '70s, however, until the first Northrop Looms were placed on the market in the latter part of 1894, looms for plain cotton fabrics made no progress; although by this time many weavers were sufficiently expert to tend from six to eight looms each on print cloth weaves.

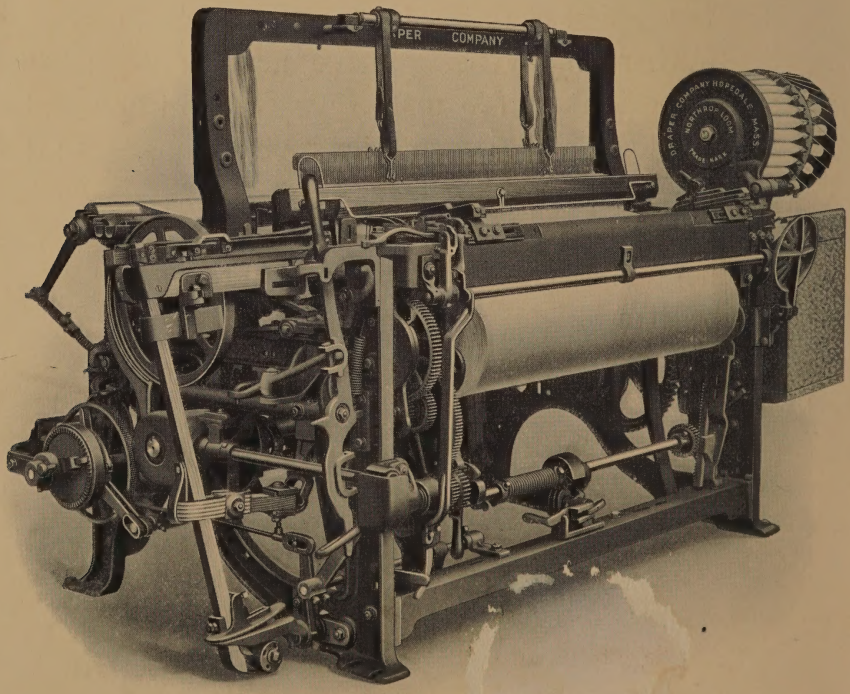
The Northrop Loom by its automatic features made it possible for a weaver with hardly any experience to operate sixteen looms, with a corresponding reduction in the labor cost of weaving; at the same time the weaver was enabled to earn more wages.

Since the first Northrop Looms were placed upon the market further improvements have made it possible to increase the number of looms per weaver; to increase the product per loom and to greatly improve the quality of the cloth.

A comparison of our two illustrations shows the development in loom design and construction during but little more than a century.







E Model Northrop Loom. 1914.